Site Summary Update **December 1999**

Alaska Railroad Corporation-Mile Post 56 Parks Highway

Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation ● Division of Spill Prevention and Response

Site Description
During May 1997 the Department of Transportation & Public Facilities (DOTPF) was in the process of upgrading the Parks Highway north of the Big Lake turnoff to approximately the City of Houston. The railroad crossing area south of the Little Susitna River at approximately MilePost 56 Parks Highway was being upgraded to build an overpass for the rail line with the road passing underneath. The existing rail line was dismantled and the area was excavated for the proposed bridge abutments. Petroleum hydrocarbon contamination was encountered during excavation 3 to 4 feet below ground surface (bgs). It was initially believed that the limits of contamination were small based on the initial sampling results but the actual excavation identified extensive contamination. It was determined the contamination resulted from a train and fuel tank truck collision in 1972.

Threats and Contaminants
Contamination found to date is petroleum hydrocarbon compounds.

Public Health and Environmental Concerns
DOTPF initially proposed to excavate only what was necessary for road construction purposes. However, ADEC requested they excavate additional material to minimize any risk posed by the contamination that could possibly impact the drinking water aquifer in the area and any surface water runoff in the adjacent drainage ditch. DOTPF agreed to continue excavating material until they achieved matrix cleanup levels or consider alternative cleanup levels at the site to allow contaminated material to remain in place beneath (and adjacent) to the bridge abutment. DOTPF indicated that excavation (greater than the 47 bgs) would require additional construction measures to support the railroad abutments. Cleanup levels for petroleum hydrocarbons have been set at the Matrix Cleanup Level for diesel range organics, Level B or 200 mg/kg.

Response Actions
DOTPF excavated all contamination in excess of ADEC Level B cleanup levels for DRO with the exception of one area with 400 mg/kg in the vicinity of the bridge abutment footing and another area with approximately 1200 mg/kg near the base of the shoofly. The final report indicated that any remaining contamination left in the ground was covered by a minimum 3 to 6 feet of soil. In addition, 4 to 6 inches of topsoil was spread over the site and revegetated to further promote runoff and prevent infiltration. Approximately 10,000 cubic yards of contaminated was excavated and stockpiled adjacent to the railroad tracks in the area.

Current Status
The threat to drinking and/or surface water was removed by excavating the contaminated soil. The soil remains stockpiled at the site awaiting a treatment and/or disposal plan from the ARRC.